

In Which
everything is
OKAY

In Which Hopper Changes the Sheets by the-singular-peep

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Summary: It wasn't uncommon in chronically ill children, or children that had been abused, so it didn't surprise Hopper. He had gone through this with Sara. But, Sara hadn't ever reacted like this. Maybe that was because Sara was never punished for simply being a child. ["IN WHICH EVERYTHING IS OKAY" SERIES. COMPLETE. PART 1/?. HAPPY NEW YEAR!]

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January 4, 1984. Wednesday.

Hopper was used to being woken up by Eleven. It had been two weeks since he had found her all cold and curled up and close to death - or at least hypothermia - in the woods, and every night since then he had been woken up by crying. Well, almost every night. The first week he was up with her all night as she was too afraid to even sleep, mainly reading to her and trying to coax her into drinking water. But every night this week, every night that the painfully small girl had been sleeping in her own bed, Hopper had been woken to her cries.

Normally they weren't too loud. They were simple cries; sometimes little whimpers, sometimes sobs turned to coughs, sometimes cries of "Papa," and once or twice she screamed. Every night.

And every night, Hopper would go into her room and sit with her until she calmed. He would rock, or sing to, or count with the child until she fell back to sleep. Every single night.

Except.. Tonight there had been no crying. Or screaming. Or whimpering. At least, not that Hopper could hear. He had woken out of his own free will, or maybe just out of habit, at two am to hear.... Nothing. Frankly, it was a little disquieting.

"El?" He called, sitting up in bed. He rubbed his eyes as he stood and pulled sweatpants over his boxers. "Eleven, you okay?"

Everything was normal when he stepped into the hallway, and even when he got up to Eleven's door. But then he heard tiny whimpers and nodded to himself. He knew something was up.

"Hey, kiddo, I'm coming in, alright?" He said, rapping lightly on the door. He got no response, but he expected that. And so he opened the door and was only a little surprised at what he saw.

Eleven was curled up in the corner away from her bed, her knees pulled to her chest and her face cupped in her hands. But then there was a slight musty scent, and her blankets were pulled haphazardly to the floor, and...

Oh.

When Sara was sick, this had happened a lot. He remembered waking up at night to his little girl giving rushed apologies in her eight year old voice.

"I'm sorry daddy, I didn't mean to, I promise." She would whimper, hugging herself close. Hopper remembered how tiny and sickly her form was, and how embarrassed she was of her accidents. The doctor had told them that it was common in chronically ill children, and that Sara's bedwetting was normal, but Sara had always just been so hard on herself.

It looked like El was experiencing the same thing.

"Hey, El, hey," Hopper tried, moving slowly into the room. "It's alright."

"Sorry, sorry, sorry," Eleven sobbed, moving backwards clumsily as soon as Hopper entered. "Sorry, sorry! 'M sorry!"

A picture frame fell from the shelf across the room, and a small snowglobe, a dusty one that had belonged to Hoppers grandfather as a lost gift for his mother, burst. Eleven was being quite loud now, her cries almost turning to screams. She was absolutely sobbing, and Hopper wasn't quite sure what to do. Sara had never done this.

But maybe that was because Sara was never punished for simply being a child.

"Hey, shh, shh, its okay, sweet girl, it's alright." He said softly as he got down at her level and reached for her softly. That nickname was one he saved only for Sara.

He figured this was a good enough time to use it again.

Eleven flinched away from his touch, but after a moment she leaned

into it. Hopper was calm and quiet as much as possible, and apparently it was working. She clung to him like a young child as her screams turned to sobs. Hopper continued to shush and pat her back as she moved towards him, her wet nightgown clinging to her legs.

It had been ten minutes by the time she calmed down to just hiccups and heavy breaths, and when this happened Hopper pulled away the tiniest bit. She grabbed at his shirt helplessly, whimpering.

"Lets get you cleaned up, yeah?"

He stood and in turn picked up Eleven, and she hugged him tightly.

"And don't worry about this. Accidents happen, kid. I'm not mad."

Eleven burrowed into his shirt, and Hopper gave a little smile.